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against my uncle. I must not reveal my identity to him.

So Rejab sat in the guest-house, and he was thinking: It is my right to marry this girl. How can I prevent the marriage? And Hamed looked around his guest-house and he saw a strange youth of great beauty seated there, and he asked: Who is he? They answered: He is one of the Shammar princes from Hail, and we do not know his name. Then Rejab rose and thanked his host and left the assembly, and he took his horse and rode off. But when he was in the cover of the palm trees he halted and turned to look at the house of Hamed, for he thought: I must carry off the girl this very day. He saw that the women's quarter was heavily guarded by slaves and eunuchs armed with swords, and all the doors to the courtyard were guarded, nor was it possible to gain entrance. But he saw also that the House of the Dawn was situated at a distance from the house, that its odours (may they be far from you) should not disturb the people of the house, and he cursed himself and thought: Had I come one day earlier I could have carried off the girl when she comes at dawn to visit the House of the Dawn, but now there is no time to wait another day. Then an idea came to him, and he took his horse and rode at a canter to Samawa.

In the bazaar of Samawa, Rejab bought first a woman's dress, and he wrapped it up and concealed it in his cloak. Then he went to the pharmacist and he bought three Roman pills. Now, let it be known to you that in these days we have many and complicated medicines, but then we had only simple remedies, and the Roman pill served both for a man and for his animals, for verily it was said, One for a man, two for a horse, three for a camel. And he took the three Roman pills and he went to the shop of the sweet maker and he bought from him a tray of the

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And how bitter was the centre of her sweet. For the Lady Aliya knew not that the sweet contained three Roman pills, the dose for a camel.

When Rejab reached his horse he stripped off the clothes of a girl and he put on his own clothes, and he strapped on his sword, and he stood by his horse, watching the House of the Dawn and thinking: It will not be long now. And after ten minutes he saw the Lady Aliya come out of the gate of the courtyard and her step was the step of one in haste, and she made towards the House of the Dawn. And when the Lady Aliya was near the House of the Dawn, but before she could enter it, Rejab rode down on her and seized her in his arms and pulled her across his horse, and he covered her mouth with his hand, nor could she utter a scream, and he turned his horse and galloped off in the direction of the desert. And with such dash and speed did he do this that the sentries saw nothing, for they were looking into the courtyard thinking: It is not fitting that we stare at the Lady Aliya while she walks towards the House of the Dawn.

When they had galloped some distance from the house of Hamed, Rejab released his hand from Aliya's mouth, and she looked at his face and she saw that he had the face of the pretty gypsy girl. And she thought: If my captor is indeed a man, and so it appears, then I am indeed in luck, for he is handsomer by far than that horrible old landowner to whom my father was going to marry me. But there was agony and pain in the stomach of Aliya, and she said: O noble stranger, let me down for a moment that I may ease myself. And Rejab replied: Wait until we are in the desert when we may see if we are pursued.

After they had entered the desert, and when there was a clear mile behind them to watch for pursuit, Rejab per-

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x539 joined the caravan. It marched at the sixth hour, and its destination was Baghdad.

x539 721 And when they had been two days on the road, and the caravan was traversing the territories of the Shammar of the Jezira, they came on Bedawin, raiders, mounted on horses and on fine camels, and the riders rode up to the caravan and cried: Who be you, where do you go, from whence do you come, and by whose permission? And the Turkish officers and soldiers who were guarding the caravan cried out: We march by order of the Government. Make way! Make way! And the raiders shouted: Are the Ottomans, then, a Government? Know you that we are the Government here, and this is our customs post, and here we levy excise. And as for the caravan, we permit it to proceed when we have levied the tax, and as for the soldiers, we disarm them and permit them to return from whence they have come, but they shall go on foot.

And the Turkish officers saw that the tribesmen were many, well mounted and well armed, so they ordered their soldiers to lay down their arms, crying: Moslems! Spare our lives! And the tribesmen said; Our pledge is given. And the Turks dismounted from their horses and turned back on foot towards Mosul, and their arms they left on the ground.

Then the tribesmen cried out: Merchants, unload your camels and open your loads, that we may inspect the merchandise and levy the tax. And the merchants and camel men made the camels kneel and commenced unx539 loading them. And Daoud was standing by a load of • 514 copper vessels and he saw that they were copper water 721 pots of that shape which has a narrow neck through which the hand cannot pass and which has a long straight

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spout, and which has only one use, and that is known to you. For is it not used for cleansing in the closet? And Daoud thought after this manner: Why should I not slip my jewels into one of these pots, for do the Bedawin use these water pots? They will never levy a tax on these goods.

So Daoud took his bag of gold and jewels and made it long and thin and he slipped it down the neck of a water pot, nor did any see him do it. And the tribesmen came and inspected the loads, crying: Merchants, the tax is half to us and half to you, for you failed to notify us of your coming, that we might come to some other agreement. And they inspected the loads and from each load they took half and left half. And verily those Bedawin took those things that their hearts desired, of silks and linens and Mosul cloth, of rugs and carpets, of sugar and tobacco, of watches and clocks, of saddles and blankets and almonds and honey, of threads and needles and cheeses and charcoal, and they even took an umbrella. But when they came to the load of water pots they laughed and said: We permit these goods to pass exempt and tax free.

And men from amongst the men, the raiders, searched each of the merchants and took from them their purses and opened them, saying: These gold coins bear the cipher of the Ottomans and are confiscated, for we do not permit their circulation in our land. And they came on Daoud and searched him, but they found with him neither goods not gold, so they questioned him, saying: Merchant, where are your goods and where is your wealth? And Daoud replied, saying: I am not a wealthy merchant. I am only a poor coppersmith making enough for my needs, and I go to Baghdad where my mother is sick, and not for purposes of trade. And they took him and led him away,